

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending, with claims 1, 9, 14, 16, and 19 being independent.

Claims 1-3, 5, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beall et al. (U.S. 6,321,224) in view of Snow et al. (U.S. 6,098,066). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 1 and 16 recite a method (claim 1) and a computer program (claim 16) for searching different data stores based on a classification of a search term that includes, among other features, receiving at least one search term and classifying the search term among at least first and second categories. The classification of the search term is used to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform a search, where a first electronic information store contains first electronic information associated with at least a first category and a second electronic information store contains second electronic information associated with at least a second category. When the search term is classified within the first category, a search is performed after classifying the search term by comparing the search term only to the first electronic information with the first electronic information store to determine whether matches exist. When the search term is classified within the second category and following the classification of the search term, a search is performed by comparing the search term to at least the second electronic information within the second electronic information store that differs from the first electronic information store to determine whether matches exist. A result is displayed based on the matches that are determined to exist.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection because Beall and Snow, either alone or in combination, fail to describe or suggest classifying the search term and then using the classification of the search term to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform a search. Beall and Snow also fail to disclose a first electronic information store that contains first electronic information associated with a first category and a second electronic information store that contains second electronic information associated with at least a second category. Additionally, Beall and Snow fail to disclose or suggest performing

the search after classifying the search term by comparing the search term only to the first electronic information store, when the search term is classified within the first category.

Beall describes an electronic catalog requisition system that includes software for selecting items from a database. See Beall, Abstract. A user interface combines keyword searching with search refinement through classification or parametric selections. "The search refinement is presented as a simple selection from a list of classifications that is dynamically compiled based on the results of the keyword search." (Emphasis added). See Beall, col. 2, lines 50-58.

With respect to the keyword search in Beall, "the searchable terms include the predefined classification terms as well as other attributes and parameters of the each catalog entry." See Beall, col. 3, lines 26-29. Fig. 3 illustrates an example search string "bic pen red", where "bic" is the manufacturer name, "pen" is the classification, and "red" is the attribute. See Beall, Fig. 3 and col. 5, lines 6-15. The software performs a proximity query and possible other search algorithms to find an exact match of the search string with the database. See Beall, col. 5, lines 16-63. The results of any matches found are displayed. See Beall, col. 6, lines 16-18.

Each of the results includes several items of information in a display list including, the category, the manufacturer name, the manufacturer part number, and descriptive attributes. See Beall, Fig. 3 and col. 6, lines 25-31. In addition to being included in the display list, the category is also listed in a separate category display area 304. The results may be refined by selecting one of the categories, which has the effect of either narrowing the currently displayed results list or, alternatively, generating a new display list containing every item in the catalog associated with the selected category. See Beall, col. 6, lines 32-64.

Beall and Snow, either alone or in combination, fail to describe or suggest classifying the search term and then using the classification of the search term to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform a search. The Office Action relies upon Beall (col. 5, lines 6-15) allegedly to support the feature of classifying the search term. However, Beall does not classify the search term among at least first and second categories. Rather, Beall provides an example search string, "bic pen red", where the term "pen" represents a "classification" type of

term. Beall uses the word "classification" to describe the type of term that the word "pen" represents, just like the term "bic" represents a manufacturer term type and the term "red" represents an "attribute" term type. Thus, Beall merely suggests that a user enters a search string and that the terms of the entered search string represent different term types. Beall does not classify the terms among at least first and second categories. This shortcoming of Beall is further demonstrated by the absence of a description with Beall of potential categories with which to match terms such as "bic". Stated differently, Beall fails to disclose the existence of several candidate categories against which terms like "bic" would be matched to effect their classification, or any other form/mechanism of classification for that matter.

Furthermore, as acknowledged on page 3 of the Office Action, it is clear that Beall does not use the classification of the search term to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform the search. Rather, Beall simply uses all of the search terms as entered by the user and performs a search to find an exact match in the database. "The software 10 performs a proximity query which will try to find an exact match of the search string within the database 14. Each record within the database is tested against the search string to find records that contain all of the search terms in proximity to each other." See Beall, col. 5, lines 16-20. Thus, Beall simply does not describe or suggest selecting among multiple electronic information stored to perform the search.

Finally, Beall does not describe or suggest performing the search after classifying the search term by comparing the search term only to the first electronic information store, when the search term is classified within the first category, as alleged in the Office Action on pages 2-3. Instead, Beall uses the results of the search, and not the search terms, to further refine the search. More specifically, as described above, Beall uses the category item of information, which is part of the search results, to enable the user to further refine the search by selecting one of the displayed categories as part of the search results. See Beall, Fig. 3 and col. 6, lines 25-64. Using the category portion of the results to further refine the search is not performing the search after classifying the search term by comparing the search term only to the first electronic information

store, when the search term is classified within the first category. Also, using the category portion of the results is not performing a subsequent search using the search term.

Snow does not remedy the failure of Beall to describe or suggest these features. Snow describes a method for searching a document directory hierarchy which partitions a user-initiated search. The document directory hierarchy includes multiple document directories stored in a tree data structure. See Snow, Abstract. If the user query includes a user-selected category, a directed search is performed. The search terms are compared to relevant document vectors and, since the search is directed, the relevant document vectors are the document vectors within the index corresponding to the desired category. The documents are grouped within the matching category names and information corresponding to each document is displayed. See Snow, col. 8, lines 9-28.

In Snow, if the user does not include a user-selected category, an undirected search is performed. The search terms are compared to each of the relevant document vectors and, since the search is undirected, the relevant document vectors are the document vectors within the zero node index. See Snow, col. 8, lines 35-41.

Snow does not describe or suggest, and is not relied upon in the Office Action to describe or suggest, classifying the search term among at least first and second categories. Instead, Snow enables a user to include a selected category in addition to search terms as part of the user query in a directed search. See Snow, col. 7, lines 63-66. Thus, Snow does not describe classifying the search term.

Also, Snow does not describe or suggest using the classification of the search term to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform a search. The section of Beall relied upon in the Office Action for allegedly describing this feature merely states that "[o]nce results are obtained the user can then select one or more categories or modify the search terms to run a more limited search." See Snow, col. 7, line 66 to col. 8, line 1. Snow does not describe or suggest using the classification of the search term to select among multiple electronic information stores to perform a search.

Finally, Snow does not describe or suggest, and notably is not relied upon in the Office Action to describe or suggest, performing the search after classifying the search term by comparing the search term only to the first electronic information store.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 16, and their respective dependent claims 2, 3, and 5.

Claims 4, 6-15, and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beall in view of Snow and further in view of Russell-Falla et al. (6,266,664).

Claims 4, 6-8, 17, and 18

Claims 4, 6-8, 17, and 18 depend from their respective independent claims 1 and 16. Russell-Falla does not remedy the failure of Beall and Snow, either alone or in combination, to describe or suggest the features discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 16. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of these claims.

Claims 9-13 and 19-21

With respect to claims 9-13 and 19-21, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 9 and 19 recite a method (claim 9) and a computer program (claim 19) for storing searchable and retrievable content into more than one distinct electronic information store that includes, among other features, receiving searchable and retrievable content to be stored within more than one distinct electronic information store, detecting a number of accesses of the searchable and retrievable content, comparing the number of detected accesses to a threshold number, and scanning the searchable and retrievable content in response to the searchable and retrievable content being accessed a threshold number of times. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal because Beall, Snow, and Russell-Falla, either alone or in combination, fail to describe or suggest detecting a number of access of the searchable and retrievable content, comparing the number of detected accesses to a threshold number and scanning the searchable and retrievable content in response to the searchable and retrievable content being accessed a threshold number of times.

Beall and Snow are not relied upon in the Office Action to describe or suggest these features, as neither in fact disclose the claimed features. Russell-Falla does not remedy the failure of Beall and Snow to describe or suggest these features. Russell-Falla describes controlling access to potentially offensive or harmful web pages. When a user requests a web page, the content of the web page is examined and analyzed prior to being displayed to the user. The content of the web page is compared against a database of words or expressions that are weighted based on the degree of offensiveness of the word or expression. After comparing the web page content to the database of weighted words and expressions, a rating is assigned to the user-requested web page. The rating of the web page is compared to a predetermined threshold rating. If the web page rating exceeds the threshold rating, the requested page is not displayed to the user. If the web page rating is below the threshold rating, the web page is displayed to the user. See Russell-Falla, col. 2, line 63 to col. 3, line 30.

This relied upon section of Russell-Falla does not describe or suggest detecting the number of times that searchable and retrievable content is accessed, and scanning the content when a threshold number of accesses is reached. In fact, Russell-Falla has nothing to do with detecting a number of accesses. Rather, Russell-Falla describes assigning a rating to a requested web page. Russell-Falla does not disclose the need or act of paying attention to how many times a particular web page is accessed because the content of every requested web page is analyzed and assigned a rating. Furthermore, since Russell-Falla does not describe detecting a number of accesses, then Russell-Falla cannot, and does not, describe or suggest comparing a number of detected accesses to a threshold number and then scanning the content based on the content being accessed the threshold number of times.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of claims 9 and 19, and their respective dependent claims 10-13, 20, and 21.

Claims 14 and 15

With respect to claims 14 and 15, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

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Serial No. : 09/749,798
Filed : December 28, 2000
Page : 14 of 14

Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-146001 / Search 02


Claim 14 recites a system for storing searchable and retrievable content among more than one distinct electronic information store that includes, among other features, a first electronic information store and a second electronic information store that are populated by searchable and retrievable content that has been automatically scanned when a detected number of accesses of the content has met a threshold number of accesses. Applicants respectfully reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection because Beall, Snow, and Russell-Falla, either alone or in combination, fail to describe or suggest the recited features. Notably, the Office Action does not even address the recited features of claim 14 that the first electronic information store and the second electronic information are populated by searchable and retrievable content that has been automatically scanned when a detected number of accesses of the content has met a threshold number of accesses. Furthermore, as discussed above with respect to independent claims 9 and 19, Russell-Falla does not describe or suggest these features.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of claim 14 and its dependent claim 15.

No fees are believed to be due at this time. During prosecution of this application, please apply any deficiencies or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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